

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A distribution management device comprising:

means for receiving via a network first order information of merchandise and second order information of said merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use the network, the first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased via the first sales channel, and the second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased via the second sales channel;

means for generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on the first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel in the first order information and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel in the second order information ~~and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received;~~

means for storing information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise;

means for deleting a portion of the generated stock control information corresponding to a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information excluding old product information, when a current date is within a predetermined number of days before the debut date; and

~~means for obtaining an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channels based on the first and the second order information and the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and~~

means for instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information ~~indicating through which of~~ from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request ~~the purchase request was received.~~

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The distribution management device according to claim 1 wherein said means for instructing instructs the supplier to stop supplying the old product in the merchandise due to a sales debut of a the new product during a the predetermined period number of days before the ~~new product is released~~ debut date.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 1 wherein said means for receiving receives the first and the second order information via the Internet as said network.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The distribution management device according to claim 4 wherein said means for receiving receives the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on said Internet.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A distribution management method comprising steps of:

receiving via a network first order information of merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and receiving via the network second order information of said merchandise, the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of sale location that does not use the network, the first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased via the first sales channel, and the second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased via the second sales channel;

generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel in the first order information and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel in the second order ~~information received and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received;~~

storing information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise;

deleting a portion of the generated stock control information corresponding to a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information

excluding old product information, when a current date is within a predetermined number of days before the debut date; and

~~obtaining an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channel based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and~~

instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information ~~indicating through which of~~ from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request ~~the purchase request was received.~~

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The distribution management method according to claim 6 wherein said ~~obtaining the actual sales condition and instructing~~ instructs the supplier of said merchandise ~~comprise instructing the supplier~~ to stop supplying the old product in the merchandise due to new product sales during a ~~the predetermined time period~~ number of days before a sales the debut date of the new product.

Claim 8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information via the Internet as said network.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 9 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving said first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on the Internet.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A program storage medium for making a distribution management device execute a program comprising steps of:

receiving via a network first order information of merchandise, the first order information being formed based on a first purchase request received via a first sales channel that uses the network and receiving via the network second order information of said merchandise, the second order information being formed based on a second purchase request received via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use the network, the first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased via the first sales channel, and the second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased via the second sales channel;

generating stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and the second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel in the first order information and the second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel in the second order information ~~received and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received;~~

storing information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise;

deleting a portion of the generated stock control information corresponding to a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old

product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information excluding old product information, when a current date is within a predetermined number of days before the debut date; and

~~obtaining an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channel based on the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and~~

instructing a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information indicating through which of ~~from which~~ was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request ~~the purchase request was received.~~

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The program storage medium according to claim 11 wherein said ~~obtaining the actual sales condition and~~ instructs the supplier of the merchandise ~~comprise instructing the supplier~~ to stop supplying the old product in said merchandise due to new product sales.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 11 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information via Internet as the network.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium according to claim 14 wherein said receiving the first and second order information comprises receiving the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be used in a World Wide Web service on said Internet.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A distribution management system comprising:

a first order information forming device for forming first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel based on a first purchase request received from a first purchaser via a ~~first sales channel that uses a network~~;

a second order information forming device for forming second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased in a second sales channel based on a second purchase request received from a second purchaser via a second sales channel which is a point-of-sale location that does not use said network to receive the second purchase request from the second purchaser;

a distribution management device configured to receive the first and the second order information ~~to be transmitted~~ from the first and the second order information forming devices via said network, and generate stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel and the second ~~order information~~ quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel ~~and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and obtain an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channels based on said first and second order information and the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and~~

the distribution management device further configured to store information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise;

the distribution management device further configured to delete a portion of the generated stock control information corresponding to a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information excluding old product information, when a current date is within a predetermined number of days before the debut date; and

a module, at said distribution management device further configured to instruct a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information indicating through which of from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request the purchase request was received.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The distribution management system according to claim 16 wherein said distribution management device is configured to instruct the supplier to stop supplying the old product in the merchandise due to a new product sales ~~to the supplier~~ during a the predetermined period number of days before a sales the debut date of the new product.

Claim 18 (Canceled).



Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16 wherein said distribution management device is configured to receive the first and the second order information transmitted from the first and the second order information forming devices via the Internet as the network.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 19 wherein said distribution management device is configured to receive the first and the second order information forming Web pages to be utilized in a World Wide Web service on the Internet transmitted from said first and the second order information forming devices.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 1, further comprising:

means for receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

means for generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

the means for instructing instructs the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The distribution management method according to claim 6, further comprising steps of:

receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

instructing the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The program storage medium of claim 11, wherein the distribution management device executes the program further comprising steps of:

receiving an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location;

generating updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged; and

instructing the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 24 (Previously Presented): The distribution management system according to claim 16, wherein the distribution management device is further configured to

receive an indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged at the point-of-sale location,

generate updated stock control information based on i) the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase

request was received, and ii) the indication that the merchandise is returned or exchanged, and

instruct the supplier to supply the merchandise based on the updated stock control information.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): A distribution management system comprising:

a first sales channel configured to receive a first purchase request from a first purchaser via a network;

a second sales channel configured to receive a second purchase request from a second purchaser at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request from the second purchaser;

a first order information forming device configured to form first order information indicating a first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel based on a the first purchase request received from a the first purchaser via a the first sales channel ~~that uses a network to receive the first purchase request from the first purchaser;~~

a second order information forming device configured to form second order information indicating a second quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel based on a the second purchase request received from a the second purchaser via a the second sales channel ~~which is a point-of-sale location that does not use said network to receive the second purchase request from the second purchaser;~~

a distribution management device configured to receive the first and the second order information ~~to be transmitted~~ from the first and the second order information forming devices via said network, and generate stock control information to control a stock of said merchandise to be distributed to the first and second sales channels based on said first quantity of merchandise purchased in the first sales channel and the second ~~order information~~

~~quantity of merchandise purchased in the second sales channel and indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel a purchase request was received, and obtain an actual sales condition of said merchandise in the first and the second sales channels based on said first and second order information and the stock control information indicating through which of the first sales channel and the second sales channel the purchase request was received; and~~

the distribution management device further configured to store information regarding a debut date on which a new product in the merchandise will replace an old product in the merchandise;

the distribution management device further configured to delete a portion of the generated stock control information corresponding to a quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel and a quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel to produce updated stock control information excluding old product information, when a current date is within a predetermined number of days before the debut date; and

a module, at said distribution management device, configured to instruct a supplier of said merchandise to supply the merchandise to the first sales channel and the second sales channel based on the updated stock control information indicating through which of from which was deleted the quantity of the old product purchased in the first sales channel that receives the first purchase request via the network and the quantity of the old product purchased in the second sales channel that receives the second purchase request at a point-of-sale location that does not use the network to receive the second purchase request-the purchase request was received.